REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to better define features of the invention. Support for the amended claim is found at least in page 5 of the present application.

1.   Independent claims 1 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,778,381 A to Sandifier in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,067,486 A to Aragones et al. Amended claim 1 and claim 18 as originally drafted should be allowed for at least the following reasons. Claim 1 now recites determining, electronically with a data processor, if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration. Claim 1 also recites planning an upgrade requirement for upgrading the actual configuration to the desired configuration if the actual configuration is noncompliant. Claim 18 recites a data processor determining if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration. Claim 18 also recites that the data processor determines an upgrade requirement for upgrading the actual configuration to the desired configuration if the actual configuration is noncompliant. Sandifier and Aragones each fail to disclose, alone and in combination, at least these features.

Sandifier does not disclose or suggest, with regard to claim 1, determining, electronically with a data processor, if the actual configuration of the mechanical equipment complies with the desired configuration, and with regard to claim 18, a data processor determining if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration. The Office Action is incorrect in its assertion that Sandifier discloses problem diagnosis and troubleshooting and that it would be obvious that if an aircraft is in the shop for a repair due to poor performance or routine maintenance, then a diagnostic or troubleshooting procedure would determine whether the aircraft is operating with specified parameters. With regard to this feature, Applicants submit that Sandifier merely discloses a system that determines if a publication describing diagnostic procedures includes a user-specified search term or terms. Sandifier, Col. 54, lines 20-48. A diagnostic or troubleshooting procedure would only analyze the aircraft to determine whether it

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is performing in accordance with its actual configuration, i.e. whether the equipment is performing according to specifications. In contrast, claim 1 recites determining, electronically with a data processor, if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration and claim 18 recites a data processor determining if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration. Indeed, nowhere does Sandifier disclose or suggest the claimed feature as recited in amended claim 1 of determining, electronically with a data processor, if the actual configuration of the mechanical equipment complies with the desired configuration. Likewise, nowhere does Sandifier disclose or suggest that claimed feature as recited in claim 18 of a data processor determining if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration.

Aragones et al. fails to fill the gaps. Aragones et al. discloses a system that retrieves engine configuration data for a plurality of limited life parts for an aircraft engine, retrieves service requirement data for at least one of the plurality of limited life parts, and automatically determines a remaining life for the at least one part. See Aragones et al., Abstract. Aragones et al. does not disclose or suggest the claimed features of determining, electronically with a data processor, if the actual configuration of the mechanical equipment complies with the desired configuration. Nor does Aragones et al. disclose or suggest a data processor for determining if the actual configuration complies with the desired configuration.

Therefore, neither Sandifier nor Aragones et al., alone or in combination, disclose or suggest at least these features of claims 1 and 18. For at least these reasons, the rejection to claims 1 and 18 should be withdrawn.

Second, the Office Action correctly points out that Sandifier does not disclose the claimed feature of planning an upgrade requirement for upgrading the actual configuration to the desired configuration if the actual configuration is noncompliant. Nor does Sandifier disclose the claimed feature of a data processor determining an upgrade requirement for upgrading the actual configuration to the desired configuration if the actual configuration is noncompliant. Aragones et al. fails to fill the gap. With regard to the Office

Action's assertion that Aragones et al. discloses planning an upgrade requirement for upgrading the actual configuration to the desired configuration if the actual configuration is noncompliant, Applicants submit that Aragones et al. merely discloses a system that calculates the remaining life for an aircraft part.

Accordingly, for at least this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 and 18 be withdrawn.

2.   Dependent claims 2-17 and 19-27 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sandifier in view of Aragones et al.

Claims 2-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1, and claims 19-27 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 18. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with regard to amended independent claims 1 and 18, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 2-17 and 19-27 also be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and notice to this effect is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if it would expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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